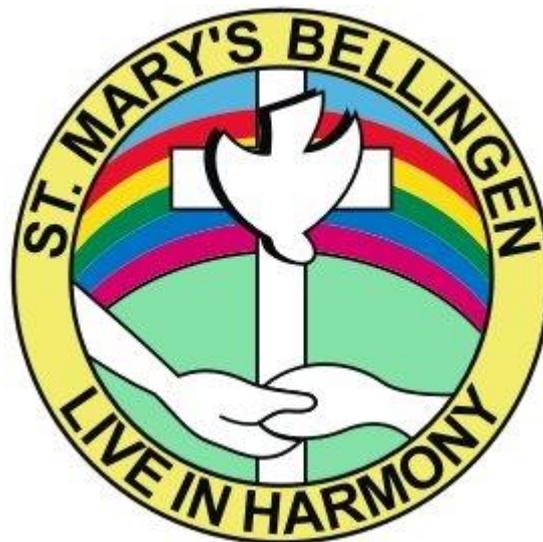# St Mary's Primary School

BULLYING POLICY

For Schools

Anti-Bullying Policy

PURPOSE

At St Mary's Primary School, we believe that all members of the community have the right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. We all share a responsibility to foster, promote and restore right relationships. We believe that bullying is unacceptable and we [students, staff and parents] all share a responsibility for preventing it.

This policy builds on the school's [insert reference to relevant Policies] to provide clear procedures and strategies to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Schools are called to establish relationships which are grounded in love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In witnessing these values we reject ideas, beliefs and behaviours which marginalise or victimise people.

POLICY CONTENT

Whilst there is no universally accepted definition of bullying, there is general consensus that Bullying behaviour:

Definition

- is deliberate and often repeated
- intends to cause fear, distress, hurt or harm to another
- is action by a more powerful individual or group over a less powerful individual or group

Bullying takes many forms, all of which will cause distress. Examples of bullying include:

- *Physical* - hitting, pushing, tripping, kicking, spitting on others etc.
- *Verbal* - teasing, using offensive names, ridiculing, spreading rumours etc.
- *Non-Verbal* - writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, using e-mail or text messaging to hurt others, rude gestures etc.
- *Exclusion* - deliberately excluding others from group, refusing to sit next to someone etc.
- *Extortion* - threatening to take someone's possessions, food or money etc.
- *Property* - stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying property etc.
- *Cyber -* any form of bullying which is carried out through electronic means such as mobile phones, email, chat room, social networking, 'sms', web page etc.

How do we prevent bullying at St Mary's Primary School]?

We believe, based on research, that prevention strategies through education that involve the whole school community [students, staff and parents] are more likely to reduce bullying. Therefore, at St Mary's Primary School we recognise that we all share the responsibility to prevent bullying.

At St Mary's Primary School we adopt the following strategies to prevent bullying:

[Insert specific strategies in place under the following dot points]

Explicit teaching of positive behaviours embedded within the curriculum addressing positive relationships, conflict resolution, resilience, bystander action etc.

Regularly recognising and acknowledging students who demonstrate appropriate behaviours that promote and restore right relationships

List specific processes in place for example reward, citizenship, student of the week, Principal's awards, Playground buddies, etc.

Vigilant classroom, playground and transition supervision

Suggestion - Include procedures for collection and review of bullying data that review 'high risk areas' such as bullying surveys [include statement around active supervision for example - Teachers are to actively supervise children at all times. Teachers should note supervisory duties for the day and turn up promptly to duty. Teachers are asked to be aware of playground 'hotspots' – toilets, stair tower, canteen area and amphitheatre and visit these areas regularly throughout their supervision duty.

Include any school based supports such as 'playground friends', 'playground buddies' etc.]

Provision of safe and structured playground spaces and activities at break times

[Suggestion - Include proactive strategies in place that encourage student activity during break times]

At St Mary's Primary School **students** are encouraged to:
- *take some positive action to stop the bullying if they observe an incident [e.g. Walk Talk Squawk, Five Finger approach]*
- *report the bullying incident to a teacher as soon as possible*
- *make it clear to their peers that bullying is not accepted*

At St Mary's Primary School **staff**s are expected to:
- *take some positive action to stop the bullying when they observe an incident*
- *pass on information about any reported or observed bullying behaviours to the Principal / Assistant Principal / Year Coordinator / for further action*

At St Mary's Primary School, **parents** are encouraged to:
- *listen to their child and encourage their child to speak to their teacher / year coordinator at school*
- *contact the school if they have a concern (e.g. Principal, Assistant Principal; / Year Coordinator)*

How do we respond to bullying at St Mary's Primary School?

Bullying is viewed as a major breach of the school rules and behavioural expectations and therefore follow up action will align with our school Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy.

Any reports of bullying will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken promptly. The response to bullying will include:

1. guidance and other support for the recipient of the bullying (e.g. re-skilling and re-teaching of strategies, resilience and social skills, counselling, conflict management skills, social networking etc.).

2. guidance and support for 'bystanders', 'supporters' and witnesses of the bullying (e.g. intervention strategies etc.),

3. age appropriate and consistent sanctions for the student who is bullied. (e.g. consistent with school Behaviour Management Policy).

4. interventions and support for the student who bullied included in a Behaviour Support Plan (e.g. specific interventions developed to reduce the bullying behaviour, teaching of replacement behaviours, reinforcers etc.).

5. where appropriate informing parents as stated in the policy and involving them in any action and follow up.

Procedures for investigating bullying and follow up

In discerning appropriate responses to bullying, the collective welfare of the school community will be balanced with the individual needs of the student.

Recommended resource for interviewing and follow up of Bullying incidents - "The Method of Shared Concern" Dr Anatol Pikas, Sweden, Readymade Productions.

- Preliminary interview(s) will be conducted to ascertain the specific nature of the bullying. These interviews should be with individuals initially (i.e. student being bullied, students witnessing bullying, student engaging in bullying behaviour, staff etc.).

- The initial interviews should focus on the safety of individuals. This should include:

  - a clear statement on the consequences if the bullying continues or if there are any reprisals as a result of the reporting of the incident.
  - immediate preventative actions that will be implemented to avoid further incidents.

Decisions will be made as to the level of severity of the incident and whether the parents of those involved need to be informed.

- Follow up interviews should focus on appropriate strategies to assist and support all involved within a Behaviour Support Plan. This Plan will specifically identify the inappropriate behaviours, name the replacement behaviours, outline strategies to support the replacement behaviours and reinforcers (both negative and positive) when behaviours occur.

- A record of the separate interviews should be kept.

- Regular monitoring and follow up with the students involved is necessary. (for example daily, prior to and after break times etc.).

- Review of the Behaviour Support Plan will take place to modify strategies and supports.

- Any further recurrence of bullying may result in an issue of warning re suspension and could lead to the implementation of suspension procedures and, if necessary, removal of the student from the school through:

    - Suspension pending negotiated transfer,
    - Negotiated transfer or
    - Expulsion

RELATED LEGISLATON, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

POLICY REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed not less frequently than once every three years.

POLICY DATES			
Formulated		*Adopted*	
Implemented		*Reviewed*	
Next Review Due			
POLICY AUTHORISATION			
Principal		*Signature*	